IN THE CLAIMS:

Please find below a listing of all pending claims. The statuses of the claims are set forth in parentheses.   For those currently amended claims, <u>underlined</u> text indicates insertions and ~~strikethrough~~ text (and/or double-brackets) indicates deletions.

1.(Currently Amended) A work support method to be implemented in a computer, comprising:

~~storing by the computer skill information of workers and information related to an end date of a training which is being received by each worker in a skill information storage unit;~~

~~storing by the computer information of each work item with respect to a work in a work item information storage unit;~~

~~storing by the computer worker information related to a worker to be registered for each work item in a work information storage unit;~~

<u>first</u> extracting by the computer, ~~with respect to each stored work item~~ in response to <u>receiving</u> a work order, worker information related to a worker having a skill capable of performing ~~each~~ <u>a</u> work item <u>with respect to the work order</u>, based on ~~the~~ <u>information of the work item with respect to the work stored in a work item information storage unit and</u> skill information of workers stored in ~~the~~ <u>a</u> skill information storage unit<u>;</u> ~~, and if no worker information is extractable for a work item as a result of said extracting,~~

<u>second</u> extracting <u>by the computer, when no worker information is extractable for the work item as a result of said first extracting, another</u> worker information related to a worker who will have a skill capable of performing ~~said~~ <u>the</u> work item <u>with respect to the work order,</u> by a time ~~when said~~ <u>the</u> work item of the work order is ~~generated~~ <u>to be performed</u>, based on ~~the~~ information related to the end date of the training stored in the skill information storage unit; and

storing by the computer, data of the extracted worker with respect to each work item in the work item information storage unit.

2.(Previously Cancelled)

3.(Currently Amended) The work support method as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of said first extracting and said second extracting extracts, by the computer, worker information of a first worker to actually perform each work item, and worker information of a second worker to assist the first worker, and stores the extracted work information of the first and second workers in ~~the~~ a work information storage unit that is configured to store worker information related to a worker to be registered for each work item.

4.(Currently Amended) The work support method as claimed in claim 3, wherein at least one of said first extracting and said second extracting extracts, by the computer, worker information of the second worker having a skill comparable to that of the first worker, by referring to the information stored in the skill information storage unit.

5.(Cancelled)

6.(Currently Amended) A work support apparatus comprising:
        a skill information storage unit configured to store skill information of workers and information related to an end date of a training which is being received by each worker;
        a work item information storage unit configured to store work item information with respect to a work;
        a work information storage unit configured to store worker information related to a worker to be registered for each work item with respect to the work; and
        a processor comprising:

a worker extracting unit configured to extract by a first extraction, ~~with respect to each work item stored in the work item information storage unit~~ in response to <u>receiving</u> a work order, worker information related to a worker having a skill capable of performing ~~each~~ <u>a</u> work item <u>with respect to the work order</u>, based on <u>the information of the work item with respect to the work stored in the work item information storage unit and</u> the skill information of workers stored in the skill information storage unit, and ~~if no worker information is extractable for a work item as a result of said first extraction,~~ to extract by a second extraction<u>, when no worker information is extractable for the work item as a result of the first extraction, another</u> worker information of a worker who will have a skill capable of performing ~~said~~ <u>the</u> work item <u>with respect to the work order,</u> by a time ~~when said~~ <u>the</u> work item of the work order is ~~actually generated~~ <u>to be performed,</u> based on the information related to the end date of the training stored in the skill information storage unit; and

a storing unit configured to store data of the extracted worker with respect to each work item in the work item information storage unit.

7.(Previously Cancelled)

8.(Currently Amended) The work support apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein said worker extracting unit extracts<u>, by at least one of said first extraction and said second extraction,</u> worker information related to a first worker to actually perform each work item, and worker information related to a second worker to assist the first worker, and stores the extracted worker information of the first and second workers in the work information storage unit.

9.(Currently Amended) The work support apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said worker extracting unit extracts<u>, by at least one of said first extraction and said second extraction,</u> worker information of the second worker

having a skill comparable to that of the first worker, by referring to the information
stored in the skill information storage unit.

        10.(Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium ~~which~~
<u>that</u> stores a work support program ~~for causing a computer to carry out~~ <u>which,
when executed by a computer, causes the computer to execute</u> a work support
~~operation, said work support program~~ <u>process, said work support process</u>
comprising:
        ~~a skill information storage procedure causing the computer to store skill~~
~~information of workers and information related to an end date of a training which is~~
~~being received by each worker in a skill information storage unit;~~
        ~~a work item information storage procedure causing the computer to store~~
~~work item information with respect to a work in a work item information storage~~
~~unit;~~
        ~~a work information storage procedure causing the computer to store worker~~
~~information related to a worker to be registered for each work item with respect to~~
~~the work in a work information storage unit;~~
        ~~a worker extracting procedure causing the computer to extract by a first~~
~~extraction~~ <u>first extracting causing the computer to extract</u>, ~~with respect to each work~~
~~item stored in the work item information storage unit~~ in response to <u>receiving</u> a work
order, worker information related to a worker having a skill capable of performing
~~each~~ <u>a</u> work item <u>with respect to the work order</u>, based on ~~the~~ <u>information of the
work item with respect to the work stored in a work item information storage unit
and</u> skill information of workers stored in ~~the~~ <u>a</u> skill information storage unit<u>;</u> ~~, and if~~
~~no worker information is extractable for a work item as a result of said first~~
~~extraction, to extract by~~
        ~~a second extraction~~ <u>second extracting causing the computer to extract, when
no worker information is extractable for the work item as a result of said first
extracting, another</u> worker information related to a worker who will have a skill

capable of performing ~~said~~ the work item <u>with respect to the work order,</u> by a time
~~when said~~ the work item of the work order is ~~generated~~ <u>to be performed,</u> based on
~~the~~ information related to the end date of the training stored in the skill information
storage unit; and

     ~~a storing procedure~~ <u>storing</u> causing the computer to store data of the
extracted worker with respect to each work item in the work item information
storage unit.

     11.(Previously Cancelled)

     12.(Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium as
claimed in claim 10, wherein <u>at least one of</u> said ~~worker extracting procedure~~ <u>first
extracting and said second extracting</u> causes the computer to extract worker
information related to a first worker to actually perform each work item, and worker
information related to a second worker to assist the first worker, and to store the
extracted worker information related to the first and second workers in ~~the~~ <u>a</u> work
information storage unit.

     13.(Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium as
claimed in claim 12, wherein <u>at least one of</u> said ~~worker extracting procedure~~ <u>first
extracting and said second extracting</u> causes the computer to extract worker
information of the second worker having a skill comparable to that of the first
worker, by referring to the information stored in the skill information storage unit.

     14.(New) The work support method as claimed in claim 1, further
comprising:

storing by the computer the skill information of workers and the information related to an end date of a training which is being received by each worker in the skill information storage unit;

storing by the computer the information of each work item with respect to the work in the work item information storage unit; and

storing by the computer worker information related to a worker to be registered for each work item in a work information storage unit.

15.(New) The computer-readable storage medium as claimed in claim 10, wherein said work support process further comprises:

storing causing the computer to store the skill information of workers and the information related to an end date of a training which is being received by each worker in the skill information storage unit;

storing causing the computer to store the information of each work item with respect to the work in the work item information storage unit; and

storing causing the computer to store worker information related to a worker to be registered for each work item with respect to the work in a work information storage unit.